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Editor
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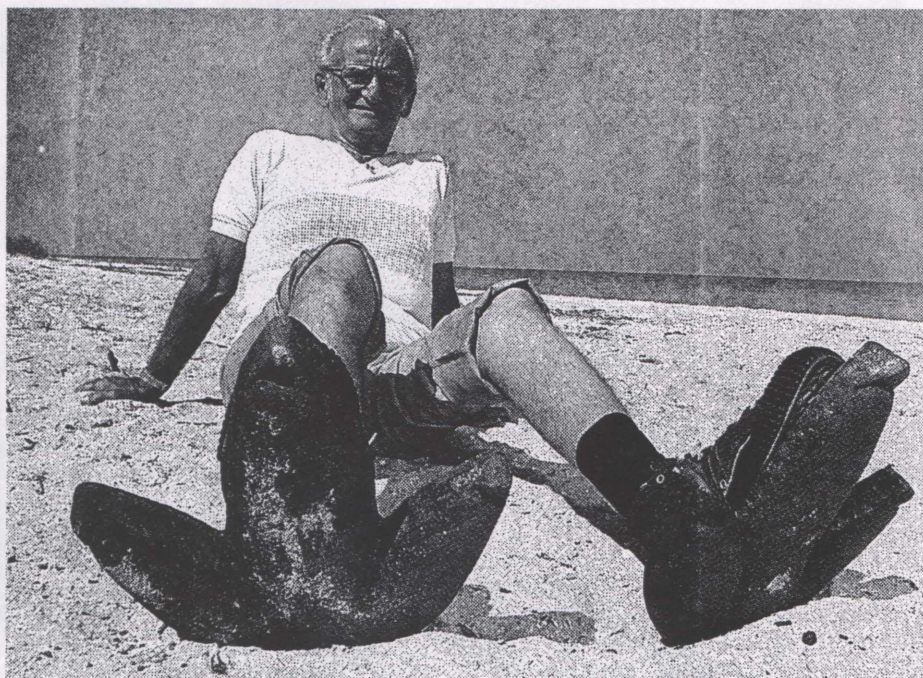
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FLORIDA "GIANT PENGUIN" HOAX REVEALED



Tony Signorini wearing cast iron feet used in the 1948 Clearwater "monster" hoax. Although the feet were made with dinosaur tracks in mind, Ivan T. Sanderson interpreted them as belonging to a "giant penguin." Now, after 40 years, the case is solved. (Joe Walles / St. Petersburg Times.)

Readers versed in cryptozoological lore will recall the case of the "giant penguin" footprints found on a Clearwater, Florida, beach in 1948.

The well-publicized incident attracted the attention of naturalist Ivan T. Sanderson, who conducted a 2-week, on-site investigation, resulting in a 50-page technical report. He summarized the case in his 1969 book *More Things*, expressing his conviction that the case was authentic.

Sanderson noted, for example, that "the tracks invariably followed the gentlest gradients even at the cost of considerable meandering and, secondly, that they meticulously avoided all possible snags and obstacles even down to the smallest bushes ...these are, one and all, typical animal traits." After dis-

cussing a series of anatomical features brought to light by the footprints, Sanderson went on to evaluate the possibility of hoaxing.

After reviewing and dismissing the possibility of machine-made prints, he discussed the man-made possibility: "If made physically by a man, either with devices strapped to his feet or on stilts, how did he carry a ton on each leg--the absolute minimum that the road engineers said could have made the imprints even in soft ground? He manifestly could not...." Sanderson also described how some engineer friends were asked to design a machine which could duplicate the tracks, but they were unable to do so.

A giant, 15-foot tall penguin, Sanderson concluded, must be the explanation, one which

"would obviously have to be a wanderer in Florida, out of its natural element and perhaps lost."

Now, 40 years later, the truth about the enigmatic tracks has surfaced. In the June 11, 1988, issue of the St. Petersburg Times, writer Jan Kirby has revealed the nature of the hoax. The Newsletter does not normally reprint articles. However, Kirby's exposure is so well written and summarizes the new information so succinctly, that an exception has been made--with the author's permission. A slightly abridged version follows.

CLEARWATER CAN RELAX MONSTER IS UNMASKED

The year was 1948. In Clearwater, Fla., a town of about 15,000, crazy things were happening. On a morning in February, a resident out for a walk on Clearwater Beach discovered what looked like the footprints of a monster and ran home to call the police.

The tracks were large--14 inches long, 11 inches wide. They had three long toes with claws. Whatever had made them apparently had come out of the Gulf of Mexico at the south end of the beach and, taking 4-foot to 6-foot strides, had walked for more than 2 miles in the soft sand before returning to the water.



A track of "Florida Three-Toes." A wanderer in Florida?

Over the next 10 years, the footprints of the "Clearwater Monster" appeared frequently: on Clearwater Beach, on Indian Rocks Beach, on the Courtney Campbell Parkway, on St. Petersburg Beach, on the beach at Sarasota. The "monster" also left prints on Honeymoon Island off the coast at Dunedin, along the banks of the Anclote River north of Tarpon Springs, and on the banks of the Suwannee River.

In July, 1948, four fliers from the Dunedin Flying School said they had seen the creature off Clearwater Bridge, and that it looked like a furry log with a head shaped like a hog's. Because of the "monster" sightings, the "little town on Florida's West Coast" made headlines and news broadcasts nationwide.

Ivan T. Sanderson, noted zoologist and science commentator for WNBC in New York as well as the science writer for the New York Herald Tribune, visited Florida in November, 1948, to study the tracks along the Suwannee. Sanderson, who died in 1973, determined after months of study that the tracks had been made by some form of giant penguin. He called the creature "Florida Three-Toes."

A number of local people, including the police, believed the whole thing was a hoax. But they had no way to prove it, and no one ever came forward to admit to it.

Until now.

Tony Signorini still chuckles when he thinks about the stories that sprung up to explain the footprints that he and the late Al Williams stamped into the sand.

Williams was a notorious prankster in Clearwater in the 1940's and 1950's. Just for fun, he once sneaked a horse into the holding area of the Clearwater police station. Another time, because he loved to play tricks on the fire department, he set

off flares in his business, Auto Electric. The fire department showed up all right, and the flares provided quite a show, but as a result the building was badly damaged.

Signorini, who was Williams' partner at Auto Electric, and, with his son and daughter, still runs the business on Greenwood Avenue in Clearwater, said Williams came up with the idea for the "monster" tracks. It seemed an appropriate prank: The Loch Ness Monster was still making news. Dinosaur remains had been dug up near Albuquerque, New Mexico, the year before, and during the war years Gulf residents had been constantly on the lookout for German submarines.

When Williams died in 1969, he left the secret of the "Clearwater Monster" with Signorini for safekeeping. Encouraged by his friends Bud and Joanne Lobaugh of Largo, Signorini agreed to bring the "monster" out of hiding. All these years, the "monster" was tucked away in its cardboard box under a workbench at Auto Electric. The real "monster" is a pair of cast iron feet with high-top black sneakers.

Signorini lifted the feet, each weighing 30 pounds, out of the box and put them on. "You see, I would just swing my leg back and forth like this and then give a big hop, and the weight of the feet would carry me that far," Signorini said, explaining the 6-foot stride of the creature. "The shoes were heavy enough to sink down in the sand."

Signorini said the idea for the big three-toed footprints came from a picture of dinosaur tracks. After several tries at making the feet, Williams and Signorini decided concrete was not heavy enough, so the molds for the tracks were taken to a foundry in St. Petersburg. The resulting cast iron feet were ideal.

Holes were drilled into the tops of the feet and the sneakers set in place with screws. When the inner soles of the shoes were glued back in place, the "monster" was ready.

A rowboat supplied by a friend brought the "creature" to shore. "We would go out nights with not too many waves or beach walkers around," he said. The "monster" came out only at night. "I put the shoes on in the water, and then walked a long way, maybe 2 miles, up the beach and then got back in the boat," Signorini said, grinning. "I had to be careful the water was not too deep when I had them on."

"Other times," he continued, "we would take them in the car and carry them to where we wanted to make the tracks. Then we'd take a palm frond and brush away all the footprints we'd made while we were doing it." At the Suwannee River site, "we stayed on property belonging to a friend named Al Spears. After we found some good places along the river, we waded in the water and carried the feet. Then I'd put them on where we wanted to make tracks."

Clearwater police were skeptical about the existence of the monster from the beginning, and suspected that Al Williams might be the culprit, said Frank Daniels, who retired in 1981 after 32 years on the Clearwater police force, the last 13 years as chief.

"I don't think any of the Clearwater cops took it seriously," Daniels said. "We suspected Williams because he usually called in the reports of the monster and was such a local prankster, but we could never prove it. When a pilot flying over the beaches reported seeing something furry with a head shaped like a hog's in the Gulf, we suspected Williams because he flew his own plane."

"You know, that's a funny

thing," Signorini recalled with a smile, "because we never knew who was flying that plane and made the report. It wasn't us."

Tony Signorini is to be commended for bringing these details out into the open after keeping them secret for 40 years. Not only does it finally close the file on a problematical cryptozoological case, it also provides a new piece of Americana for folklorists and sociologists to study -- and enjoy.

The lesson to be learned within cryptozoology is, of course, fundamental. Despite careful detailed analyses by zoologists and engineers, which provided detailed and sophisticated mechanical and anatomical conclusions supporting the hypothesis of a real animal, we now see that, not only was the entire episode a hoax, but that it was perpetrated by relatively amateur, good-natured pranksters, not knowledgeable experts attempting, though their expertise, to fool zoological authorities.

Although Sanderson was known as a colorful and sometimes eccentric individual, he was also extremely knowledgeable on many subjects, and had done more fieldwork than most zoologists do today. Even so, it seems that, in this case at least, he



Ivan T. Sanderson holding "Florida Three-Toes" cast in 1948.

failed to identify the true nature of the phenomenon.

In his 1969 book, Sanderson stated: "That any man or body of men could know so much about wild animal life as to make the tracks in just the manner that they appear, but that they also should be able to carry this out time and time again at night without anybody seeing them or giving them away...is frankly incredible."

And yet, that is exactly what happened. The Clearwater Monster or Giant Penguin may now be inducted into the Cryptozoology Hall of Fame as one of the best and most colorful hoaxes of all time. □

FORTHCOMING

In preparation for 1989 newsletters:

- * Remembering the coelacanth 50 years after its discovery, including an interview with its discoverer, Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer.
- * Details of the new monitor lizard discovered in Yemen.
- * The latest on the new lemur species discovered in Madagascar.
- * An in-depth interview with Sasquatch authority John Green.
- * New reports of recent eastern panther sightings.
- * The latest on new Yeti expeditions.
- * The question of "Big Cats" in Britain.
- * An annotated bibliography of new cryptozoology books.
- * And, of course, lots, lots more.

THIRD MEGAMOUTH FOUND

In August of 1988, Tim Berra, an ichthyologist at Ohio State University, began a sabbatical leave at the Western Australian Museum, at Perth. Dr. Berra, an ISC member, wasn't expecting too much excitement during his research stay in the relatively isolated Western Australia area.

He was wrong. On August 18, within one week of his arrival, a megamouth shark, thought to be one of the rarest fish in the world, beached itself at the resort town of Mandurah, just south of Perth. The 16-foot specimen was pushed back to sea by local residents, who thought it was a cetacean. It later died, and drifted back to the beach.

Megamouth was first discovered only 12 years ago when, in November of 1976, the first specimen was accidentally caught --and raised--in the parachute-anchor of a U.S. Navy research vessel off of Hawaii. In November of 1985, a second specimen was accidentally netted off California's Santa Catalina Island by a commercial fishing vessel (see Newsletter, Spring, 1985).

The genus and species were formally described in 1983 as Megachasma pelagios (see Newsletter, Winter, 1983). The first specimen is preserved at the Bishop Museum, in Honolulu, and the second is on display at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History.

Fortunately, upon identification by Barry Hutchins, the Museum's curator of fishes, the new specimen was rapidly transported to Kailis & France, a fishing company, where it was immediately frozen. On August 21, the Museum put the frozen specimen on public display--in a shaded area outside of the Museum--for the first time.

This temporary display lasted only 4 hours, but 3,600 Perth residents lined up for 300 feet to see it. The specimen was then returned to Kailis & France's freezer. The Museum is planning to preserve the specimen and place it on permanent display at a later time.

Like the whale shark and the basking shark, megamouth is a filter-feeder, and quite harmless to marine vertebrates--or

humans--despite its large size. It is, in fact, one of the largest sharks in the world, as most shark species do not exceed 6 or 7 feet in length.

Dr. Berra, who is very skeptical about most cryptozoological reports, has kindly provided the Secretariat with good photos of the third megamouth, and in a letter he called it "an incredible beast."

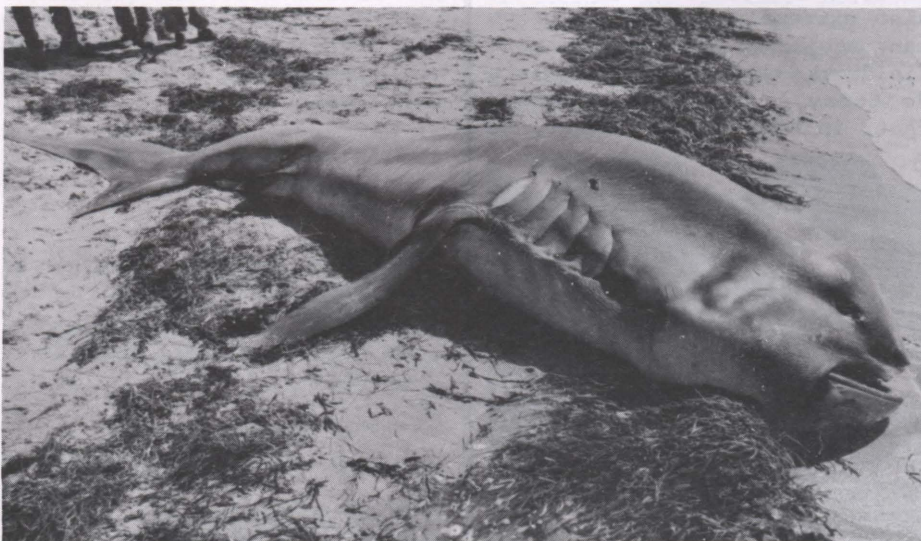
He also reported: "We must now figure out how to preserve it. We will dig a large hole, line it with swimming pool liner, and inject formalin with garden sprayers after removing the gut and liver. These organs will, of course, be studied. We have ordered eleven 55-gallon drums of formalin, and the display people will come up with a glass tank in which to permanently display it. It was quite a welcome, that first week."

The Museum is fortunate to now have in its collection one of the world's rarest zoological specimens, one which will undoubtedly contribute towards our understanding of this little-known animal.

Like the first two specimens, the third megamouth is an adult male. Somewhere out there, however, there must be females, which tend to be larger in most shark species.

Although in a strict sense megamouth did not represent a cryptozoological discovery--the animal was not ethnoknown or previously reported by human observers--it is a splendid example of "what could be out there."

As a Western Australian Museum megamouth handout states: "The biggest surprise about this shark is that we have distinctive animals of enormous size which are still being discovered. Who knows what other wonders might yet be found swimming in the depths of our oceans?" □



Third megamouth known to science after washing up on a beach south of Perth, Western Australia. Somewhere out there, there must be females. (Barry Hutchins / Western Australian Museum.)

ONZA IDENTITY STILL UNRESOLVED

A complete specimen of an Onza, the legendary, long-legged, puma-like cat of Mexico's western Sierra Madre, was obtained in early 1986. The specimen was dissected in Mazatlan, Sinaloa, in February of that year, and tissues, blood, and osteological material were brought to the United States for further study (see Newsletter, Spring, 1986).

Since that time, little has been reported, and the investigators involved, Troy Best and Richard Greenwell, explain that they have been so involved with other work that they have had to temporarily put the Onza project aside.

This lack of progress has made some observers suspect that the Onza has turned out to be nothing more than an ordinary puma. "This is not the case," states Dr. Best, a University of New Mexico mammalogist who will soon be joining the zoology faculty at Auburn University, in Alabama. "We have both been so swamped with other things, that we have simply not had the time to pursue it. It has nothing to do with what the Onza might or might not be."

Some progress was made on the biochemical front, however, when Onza tissues were supplied to workers at Texas Tech University for analysis by a technique known as electrophoresis. The Texas team had many Big Bend, Texas, puma tissues at its disposal, and the Onza tissues were run with the Texas material. The results were disappointing, but not conclusive. They reportedly found no significant differences between Onza and puma tissues. However, no formal report with precise data was received from the Texas team.

Furthermore, electrophoresis does not always give the whole picture. The procedure can

determine if two species are very close genetically, but it cannot always determine if two species are, in fact, distinct. Dr. Best gives the example of two allied forms of kangaroo rats, in which no distinction can be made through electrophoresis, but the forms are, in fact, distinct species. What the Texas results do indicate is that, at the very least, Onza and puma are very close genetically, but that is a supposition which was already held by the Onza investigators.

Best and Greenwell hope to move soon to other biochemical techniques, such as immunological response (radioimmunoassay) and mitochondrial DNA, and they have discussed the matter with specialists in several laboratories.

Osteological studies also need to be carried out. "I know it sounds strange," states Greenwell, "but we simply haven't yet had the time to go to the big museums and get the comparative measurements we need, particularly measurements of female puma limb bones." Best and Greenwell hope not only to demonstrate that their female Onza limb bones are longer, but that this can be supported by statistical evidence.

"Our opinion about the Onza hasn't really changed since the day we got the specimen," states Greenwell, who serves as Secretary of ISC. "It may be a new species. On the other hand, it may also just be a regional genetic peculiarity."

Word from Mexico, meanwhile, is that another Onza was shot in the San Ignacio district of Sinaloa by a wealthy Mazatlan hunter in early 1987. Unfortunately, the bones were discarded and are now lost. The locals, however, assure rancher Ricardo Urquijo, Jr., who has

been working with the American investigators in trying to get to the bottom of the Onza mystery, that this individual was a male, but looked exactly like the cat that had been dissected the year before.

Greenwell considers this good news, as almost all of the supposed Onzas shot so far had been females. "This gave us an uneasy feeling that we might be dealing with a sexual dimorphism problem," states Greenwell. "Although it's unfortunate that we lost the skeleton of this male, it gives us a little more confidence to learn that it was a male."

He and long-time Onza investigator Robert Marshall have also been hoping to obtain photos--and possibly bones--of a supposed Onza which was captured alive in a trap and held in captivity on a ranch in northern Sonora, quite close to the Arizona border.

The capture reportedly occurred about 2 years ago. The information reached the Americans quite by chance, but so far the photos have not been forthcoming, and Greenwell and Marshall are reluctant to mount a search for the bones without first seeing the photos; there is the possibility that the animal was simply a puma, or even a jaguarundi.

According to their informant, the Onza was kept alive for several days, but when the ranchers could not interest any authorities in looking at it, they simply shot it. The body was discarded in a wash. If the photos are, in fact, of an Onza, they are probably the only ones in existence of a live specimen.

This report was of special interest to Marshall, who had found that, already by the 1950's, Onza stories in Sonora

were more uncertain and even mythical, and that the only reliable contemporary reports came from the state of Sinaloa, further to the south. The new informant states that ranchers in the area where the supposed Onza was captured, in Sonora, assure him that the puma-like animals are still to be found in nearby mountains.

This could mean that the Onza

may have returned to Sonora after having its range reduced earlier in the century, or that it never really left the state, but has remained in small, isolated pockets.

While the mystery continues, Dale Lee, who in 1938 was the first American to go public with having shot an Onza, died in Tucson in June, 1988, at about 80 years of age. Consid-

ered a living legend in hunting circles, Lee was the last of the famous Lee brothers, and had taken almost 500 puma in his hunting career, as well as over 100 jaguar. To the end, he maintained that the cat he shot in Sinaloa half a century before was not a puma.

The newsletter will keep readers posted on new Onza developments as they occur. □

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

I am often asked why our journal, *Cryptozoology*, is not found in such-and-such university library, and why the Society doesn't promote more library sales. These are good questions, ones which I shall now try to address for the benefit of all members.

First, let us see how other scientific societies fare. A few years ago, I attended a special workshop organized by our publisher, Allen Press, Inc., in Lawrence, Kansas, for its journal editors. The free workshop covered all aspects of journal editing, production, and marketing. One thing which soon became apparent to me was that most of the other journals represented at the workshop (there were about 20 of us) had very large library sales, which generated large incomes.

One of the participants, as I recall, actually stated that library sales should represent the meat of a society's income, while membership dues should merely represent the added gravy which makes a society profitable. Many of the journal editors present talked about ways of increasing their library sales even further. Well, I knew that we would never be as large as some of Allen Press' other journals (over 150 titles), such as the *Journal of Mammalogy* or *Ecology*, but I thought that we wouldn't do too badly.

This assessment, however, was

incorrect. Today, ISC has fewer than 50 academic library subscriptions, and the Society has had to survive on the gravy alone; that is, the income from membership dues and donations.

Why is this? After further analysis, and discussions with Arly Allen himself, I have identified what I think are the problems involved. First, following the academic boom of the 1960's, big cutbacks began occurring in library acquisitions budgets in the 1970's and 1980's. The situation has improved somewhat recently, but many libraries, even large and important ones, are still not taking on any new journals, and some are even canceling existing subscriptions.

This has been mainly due to another important factor, the proliferation of scientific journals in recent years, making the competition fierce. It seems that however obscure the subject matter, a journal is created for it, and the field of cryptozoology has been no exception.

In 1979 it was estimated that a scientific paper was published on the average of every 35 seconds. That figure must be much higher today. *Science Citation Index* recently compared journal publication in 1965, which saw 9,432 issues of 1,146 journals, to 1986, which saw 27,588 issues of 3,222 journals!

Thus, libraries, which have

to find the shelf space for all of this, are relying more and more on faculty input in deciding which journals to carry. What do faculty members recommend? Obviously, they recommend those journals which more directly relate to their field of research and teaching. *Cryptozoology*, as we all know, does not easily lend itself to such narrow academic pigeonholes; thus, our journal is rarely recommended by the average faculty member.

Experience has shown us that promotional mailings to university libraries are almost useless (and our kind of journal is not marketable with public libraries, except perhaps a few of the very large ones). Such libraries receive piles of promotional literature every day, and most of it gets discarded with hardly a glance.

Thus, we have concluded the following: The only way for *Cryptozoology* to increase its library sales is for ISC members at universities to specifically request it. The Secretariat recently sent a memo to many known academic members asking them to do just that, and some results are apparent. We would now like to broaden this program, and request all members who are affiliated with universities in some capacity to request their libraries to initiate subscriptions, and, if possible, to order all back issues.

Members who would like to help should ask the Secretariat

to mail them a special descriptive sheet on Cryptozoology, reprinted from the annual Allen Press Catalogue. This sheet is specifically designed for libraries, and contains all prices and ordering information. Library subscriptions (which include the receipt of the Newsletter) will be \$45 starting in 1989.

While increasing our library sales to 100 would bring us close to eliminating our annual deficits, there is also another dimension to the problem, one which has nothing to do with

money. Do we want Cryptozoology to be in the libraries, so more scholars have access to them, both now and in the future? Do we want our journal to be part of the fountain of knowledge being generated by 20th century society? I think the answer from most, if not all, members would be "yes."

I look forward to hearing from those members who can help us further in this important area.

J. Richard Greenwell
Editor



Angelo Capparella.

Mexico, Central America, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru. In 1988, he also conducted fieldwork on the Chilean part of Tierra del Fuego.

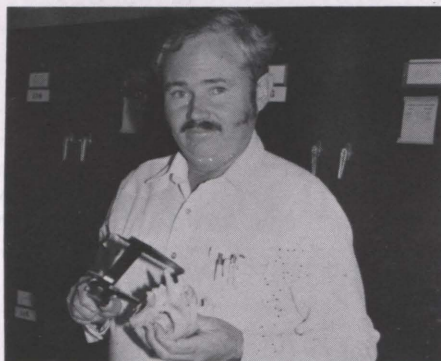
BEST, CAPPARELLA JOIN EDITORIAL BOARD

Troy Best and Angelo Capparella have joined the Editorial Board of the Society's journal, Cryptozoology, representing the fields of mammalogy and ornithology.

Troy Best did graduate work at the University of Oklahoma, obtaining a Ph.D. in 1976. Until recently, he has been on the faculty of the University of New Mexico, and is now affiliated with the Department of Zoology and Wildlife Science at Auburn University in Alabama.

Recognized as an authority on the biology and evolution of kangaroo rats, Dr. Best has recently been conducting an extensive project reviewing variability and subspeciation in the puma. Within cryptozoology, his interests mainly concern reports of what may be undocumented felid species, and he is active in the investigation into the Mexican Onza.

Dr. Best is the author of many publications, and he has held various editorial positions with zoological societies. In 1987, he was appointed editor of Mammalian Species, a series of monographs on all the known mammalian species of the world



Troy Best.

published by the American Society of Mammalogists.

Angelo Capparella, a charter member of the Society, studied at the University of North Carolina, Texas Tech University, and Louisiana State University, where he obtained a Ph.D. in 1987. He then spent a year in the Ornithology Department of the American Museum of Natural History on a postdoctorate, and is now on the faculty of the Department of Biological Sciences at Illinois State University, at Normal.

A specialist on genetic population structure, speciation, and the zoogeography of Neotropical birds, particularly in the Amazon Basin region, Dr. Capparella has done fieldwork in

Two other Editorial Board members, meanwhile, have made important transitions. Bernd Wursig, formerly of the Moss Landing Marine Laboratories of California State University, has recently joined the faculty at Texas A. & M. University at Galveston.

As a marine mammalogist with extensive research experience on the behavior and ecology of various cetacean species, Dr. Wursig is the new Director of Texas A. & M.'s Marine Mammal Research Program. His latest paper, entitled "Cetaceans," is to appear shortly in Science.

The other transition is that of Justin Wilkinson, a geomorphologist at South Africa's University of the Witwatersrand, who recently returned to the United States to join the Solar System Exploration Division of Lockheed Engineering and Sciences Co., Houston, which is under contract to NASA.

Dr. Wilkinson will be spearheading efforts to better utilize scientifically the many thousands of images of the Earth taken by shuttle astronauts, as well as training astronauts on improved techniques for photographing geological features. Dr. Wilkinson, it will be recalled, participated in the 1981 Mackal expedition to the Congo in search of Mokele-Mbembe. □

RENEWAL INFORMATION

The time has come to renew memberships for 1989. Annual membership in the Society, which includes the receipt of four newsletters and one journal, is now \$30.

Members are requested to use the enclosed renewal form/return envelope when sending in their payments. Although this is not mandatory, the use of the form makes renewal processing much simpler, and it also reduces errors.

Members who are so inclined may, of course, add donations (tax deductible with the IRS for U.S. members). We are very dependent on such donations, large and small, and they are much appreciated. A donation of any size automatically makes the

donor a Sustaining Member for the year, and his or her name will be included in the end-of-year listing of Sustaining Members.

Also, beginning in 1989, one of our Benefactors has started a "matching funds" challenge with all members. He will match every donation to the Society, dollar for dollar, up to a maximum of \$5,000. For further details, see accompanying article titled "Sustaining Members Continue to Increase."

All payments, except those from Canada, should be in US dollars. Although US dollar payments from Canadian members are preferred, payments in Canadian dollars will be accepted if the exchange rate current at the

time is used (the Society is not subject to bank fees with Canadian dollar checks).

Payments from other countries may be made by international postal money order or by international bank draft, but in the latter case, checks must be drawn against U.S. banks. If they wish, European members may send US\$ checks, also drawn on U.S. banks, to the Secretariat for Europe (see address on enclosed renewal envelope).

British members may pay their dues in pounds sterling if they wish. Membership in pounds is £18. However, such payments must be mailed to the Secretariat for Europe, and checks should be drawn against U.K. banks.

Members are asked to renew by return mail if possible, as processing is more efficient if done in larger batches. □

SUSTAINING MEMBERS CONTINUE TO INCREASE

The Secretariat is pleased to announce that 156 members contributed amounts above the normal \$25 membership fee for 1988, thus becoming Sustaining Members for the year. All members who contributed at least double the membership fee (for a total of \$50) received a gift ISC pocket calendar for 1989.

This voluntary membership support, which helps close the gap between normal membership income and expenditures, is both unprecedented and gratifying. The total number of Sustaining Members in 1984 was 71, growing to 125 by 1987, and, as indicated, to 156 in 1988.

We are also pleased to report that, by the end of the Society's 1988 fiscal year, which ran until February 28, 1989, the Society had about 860 paying members, which represents another steady climb from 1987's 770 members. The percentage of 1988 members who were also Sus-

taining Members was thus over 18 percent.

Members will recall that a special fund was opened in 1988 to raise cash for the much-needed new computer. While some donors indicated "computer fund" in their payments, most did not, either because they simply forgot to mark it, or because they did not want to earmark the donation towards a specific category. As stated in the Summer Newsletter, publishing a list of computer donors only could be offensive to some members who thought they were to be on the list but find they were not.

Thus, we are now including all donors, regardless of the purpose of the donation, but we are breaking them down into three categories: Category 1 lists members who donated up to \$24 above the membership fee of \$25; Category 2 lists those who donated from \$25 to \$99, and

Category 3 lists those who donated \$100 or more. Category 1 includes 107 members, Category 2, 40 members, and Category 3, 9 members.

For reporting purposes, joint members are counted as a single. The listing includes only those who donated during -- or for -- 1988; it does not include donations which may have already been made for 1989.

1988 SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Category 1

Richard Adair, Victor Albert, Robert Ash, Wally Bellows, James Brewer, Bruce Brown, David & Mandy Brown, Bill Cacciolfi, Narda Calhoun, Alejandro Carrillo, Wayne Cermak, Alessandro Chiminello, Loren Coleman, Curtis Cook, Walter Coulson, James Crocker, David de Lucca, Bruno de Rossi, Franziska Dokter, Alex Downs III, Clinton Drymon, Conrad Durst.

David Flood, Robert Floyd, James Foley, Dan Gettinger, Gary Gieseke, Daniel Gilbert, David Gipson, Shirley Gipson, Mark Hall, Joseph Haydu, John Heckman, James Hewkin, Richard Hobbs, Geoffrey Hunt, Keith Hunter, Diane Irwin, Keith Johnson, Michael Johnson, Woodson Johnson, Fritz Johnston, Joseph Joyce, Christ Kanoles, L.J. Kendall, Arthur & Beverly Keiper, Peter Kirkham, Gia Koontz, Lawrence Kubacki II.

Walter Langheim, Jack Lapsertitis, Lory Lazarus, Jan Libourel, Lorna Lloyd, Marianne Lorch, John Henry Lyons, Roy Mackal, John Maliwacki Molly Maloy, Gary Mangiacopra, David Mandley, M.'t Mannelje, Adrienne Mayor, Billy Morrison, William Bird Mounsey, Joseph McCormack, Michael McGovern, Leslie McKenzie, David & Tina Nichols, Brad Norris, John Pelter, Ian Peters, Maurizio Pettinelli, George Pickwell, Howie Pine, Michael Playfair, Michael Pugliese.

Andrew Ragan, Michel Raynal, James Robbins, Stanley Rocush, Ronald Rosenblatt, Eileen Roy, Paul Salerno, Stanley Samuelson, Earl Scarr, John Scheel, Karl Shuker, Christopher Smith, Lance Stoney, Jan-Ojuind Swahn, Joe Swatek, Osamu & Kenji Tagaya, David Taylor, Charles Thomas, R.W. Thompson, Mark Thorsland, Simon Townsend, Lawrence Tribula, Rich Unsbee, Henry Van Epp, David Warner, Osamu Watanabe, Nagao Yoshio, Edmund Wood, Forrest Wood, Joseph Zarzynski & Pat Meaney.

Category 2

Mark Angelcyk, Dominic Belfield, Ronald Bannister, Francis W.W. Bernard, Daniel Bloch, Robert & Dolly Brabant, Mark Chesney, Darryl Coon, Peter Crall, Russell Gebhart, Colin Groves, Wayne Harris, Willard Hart, Richard Heiden, Phil Keb, Luc Lauzon, Nicolas Le Souef, Michael & Rebecca Manyak, Dirk Mattheisen, Charles Minderhout, Robert Moy, Sharon Nevin.

Jean Palesi, Don Pasewark, Peter Pranis, Bruce & Jannie Rivera, Gabriel Sanchez, Ennio Scannapieco, John Schaefer, Austin Sheatsley, Michael Shields, Jeffrey Short, Ted Straiton, Franco Tassi, Gavin Troster, Anders Tullberg, Christopher Walas, Brent Wilcox, Thomas Wilkinson, Thomas Williams.

Category 3

Greg Aten, Bruce & Beverly Burgess, Blair Cooke, William Dragovan, Dennis Glavin, Peter Jaszi, Donald Kellar, Paul LeBlond & Annette Shaw, Hugh Trotti.

The Society is also indebted to Benefactors Robert Dorion and Ned Winn for their continued support.

The combination of increasing membership, higher membership dues, and increasing voluntary contributions has put the Society on a better financial footing. Although the Society is still not completely self-supporting, it has a higher membership than ever, and, even more important, its membership is increasingly dedicated.

The goal now is to continue the momentum and reach a membership of 1,000--the magic number we have been aiming at for years --and increase the number of Sustaining Members to 200, or 20 per cent.

Thus, all members are urged to add something extra when paying their membership dues for 1989. Those who have already paid their 1989 dues may send in an extra donation at any time, up to February 28, 1990, for the donation to be included in the 1989 tabulation.

American members of the Society are also reminded that donations to ISC are tax-deductible. The IRS Tax Identification No. is 94-2915129.

As the membership fee is now \$30, the formula for Sustaining Members for 1989 will be as follows: Category 1 will include all those making donations of up to \$29 above the normal membership fee of \$30; Category 2 will include all those donating between \$30 and \$99; Category 3 will include those donating \$100 or more.

To encourage more members to become Sustaining Members, and to donate larger amounts, one ISC Benefactor (who prefers to remain anonymous to the general membership, but has discussed his proposal with the Board), is offering to double any amount donated to the Society for 1989.

That's right. Whenever a member adds \$5 or \$10 to his or her membership payment--or \$100 --this Benefactor will donate an equal amount to the Society, up to a total maximum of \$5,000.

This concept was first tried in 1986, with the establishment of the Cryptozoology Operations Foundation Group (COFG) (see Newsletter, Summer, 1986). However, the plan at that time was for the Benefactor to match every \$1,000 donated by another individual. Unfortunately, it proved impossible to raise five \$1,000 donations a year, and COFG thus became inactive.

Now that the Benefactor in question is willing to match all donations, not just \$1,000 contributions, the "matching funds" concept becomes more feasible. Also, by involving the general membership and letting them participate in the Society's growing success, the number of Sustaining Members will hopefully continue to increase.

Some members may prefer, instead, to avail themselves of the opportunity to become Benefactors to the Society. To become a Benefactor, a member must make a minimum one-time payment of \$1,000 (larger sums are also acceptable!).

Such a donation (which would also be matched by the anonymous Benefactor) would add the individual's name to the Benefactor listing on the back pages of both the Society's newsletter and journal. Benefactors also automatically receive life membership (including the receipt of all publications), with no obligation to pay anything ever

again--although some Benefactors have made further donations.

Needless to say, any individuals wishing to become Benefactors would be very welcome. Over the years, the Society has tried unsuccessfully to receive corporate support, but not one dollar has been forthcoming.

Thus, the continued support of Benefactors and Sustaining Members will continue to be indispensable.

In return, all we can offer donors is the satisfaction of knowing that they are providing the sole support for the only international society of its kind in the world □

CRYPTOLETTERS

The Editor welcomes letters from readers on any topic related to cryptozoology, but reserves the right to shorten them or to make slight changes to improve style and clarity, but not meaning.

To the Editor:

I was very interested in Stanley Samuelson's letter on reported giant frogs or toads in the Paraguayan Chaco (Newsletter, Spring, 1988).

It is certainly not impossible that unknown species of unusually large batrachians continue to elude scientific detection. For example, the type specimen of the giant Colombian toad Bufo blombergi was only obtained in 1950, while a new species of giant Sumatran frog was discovered as recently as 1969.

In addition, a number of secluded Andean valleys in Chile and Peru allegedly contain extremely large and poisonous batrachians belonging to a mysterious form referred to locally as "hill toads" (sapo de loma). This latter amphibian does not appear to have been formally documented by science. At the same time, of course, it may be nothing more than a local legend.

Can other ISC members supply further details?

Karl Shuker
West Bromwich, England, U.K.

To the Editor:

Thank you for your kind invitation to join your Society.

An accident which left me totally paralyzed in 1962 appears to be having delayed after-effects, and I have to spend at least an hour every day in physiotherapy or exercise. Ironically, this extra demand on my already seriously limited time and energy has occurred just when I am involved in two novels, half a dozen other books, and at least two motion picture productions.

You will appreciate, therefore, that I have to curtail my current activities, such as attending public engagements. I wish your Society luck, and I hope that you find something. As for me, I'm canceling my existing subscriptions!

I might add that I feel fine and consider that I still have a pretty good chance of seeing what really happens in 2001. However, I must take the "worst case" scenario into account, and concentrate all resources on my existing commitments.

Arthur C. Clarke
Chancellor
University of Moratuwa
Colombo, Sri Lanka

To the Editor:

I note that, in proposing his sublimated snow hypothesis (Newsletter, Autumn, 1987), Dr. Bauer restricts himself to Yeti tracks. I think this is wise, given that Bigfoot tracks have

been found mainly in sand, soil, mud, and road dust, none of which are given to sublimation.

There is also the question of stride. Bigfoot can allegedly cover 5 feet in one step. By contrast, I am 6 feet 4,, and cover 5 feet in two steps. I don't think sublimation could change stride length.

As for it changing the tracks of a snow-frequenting monkey into Yeti tracks, I offer the following. Not having heard of anybody else doing it, I once made barefoot tracks in the snow of my yard. I then measured them (my naked foot is 12.15 inches long) and photographed them--with a yardstick in the picture.

Over the next week, I watched, measured, and photographed the tracks. They did enlarge slightly, and details of foot structure (i.e., toes, ball, arch) blurred out, losing their distinctiveness. However, they didn't grow to be 18 inches long and 6 inches wide. They just became ill-defined indentations, and looked like any old tracks made in the snow by shod feet.

If Dr. Bauer wants his hypothesis to be seriously considered, I suggest that he has to go the barefoot-in-snow route, complete with several days of photodocumentation.

George W. Earley
Mount Hood, Oregon, U.S.A.

"Ignorance doesn't kill you, but it makes you sweat a lot."

Haitian proverb

To the Editor:

In reading an item in an older issue ("Big Bird Is Back," News and Notes, Newsletter, Winter, 1983), I thought I would submit the following 1733 account from a small English village about 4 miles from Carlisle. I quote from Enchanted Britain, by Marc Alexander (Arthur Barker, London, 1981):

"One of the oddest accounts of a mythical creature relates to the parish church of All Saints, in the little Cumbrian village of Renwick--odd because although belief in monstrous creatures does not seem out of place in Medieval times, it is surprising to find it in the Eighteenth Century. Yet, to this day the villagers are referred to as 'Renwick Bats' as a result of a cockatrice's visitation....

"When Bishop Nicholson inspected the church in 1725, he discovered there was no glass in the windows and even the chancel was without a floor. Following his recommendations, it was decided to replace it with a new building on the same site, the present All Saints being the result of a third rebuilding in 1846.

"In 1733 the work of demolition was undertaken by a number of village workmen. When the walls had been knocked down and work began on what remained of the old floor, the men suddenly fled with cries of terror. From out of a dark hole ascended a huge winged creature which flapped after those who had unwittingly disturbed it. The villagers barred their doors against it, trembling at its eerie cries as it flapped about the village.... It met its match in the person of John Tallantire, one of the workmen who had been demolishing the church beneath which it had made its home. With the branch of a rowan tree...he set about the creature in the churchyard, and after a savage fight, managed to

kill it.

"According to the account kept in All Saints' Church...he was relieved from the duty of tithe-paying (as a local hero, presumably). Whatever it was that John Tallantire slew that day, its wings were shaped rather like those of a bat and from then on the people of the surrounding villages bestowed the soubriquet of 'bats' on the inhabitants of Renwick.

"In his Ghosts of the Lake Countries, Gerald Findler wrote in 1972: 'Records show that, since then, even as recently as ten years ago, people say they have seen an enormous black bird-like figure flying around Renwick on certain evenings.'"

Truly an incredible story in a British setting, recalling the kongamato in Bernard Heuvelmans' On the Track of Unknown Animals, or Ivan Sanderson's "giant bat" encounter in the Cameroons.

Lorna Lloyd
Martley, Worcester,
England, U.K.

To the Editor:

The comment on "lost" animals found in museums ("World's Largest Gecko Discovered," Newsletter, Spring, 1988), is, of course, true, but is not too widely known.

As an example, James Chapin's search for the then unknown Congo peacock, Afropavo congensis, started with his 1936 discovery of mysterious mounted specimens in a Brussels museum. The late Ivan T. Sanderson also mentions in one of his books how German zoologists, in examining specimens of, I believe, a common European dormouse species at the British Museum, discovered six other species in the collection, none of which had been previously described by anyone.

Bauer and Russell may have a lot of current work on hand, but I do wish somebody like them, if not they themselves, would go after some Algonquin Amerindian legends, specifically about something given as wapsi mooswa ("great moose snake"). This very large creature was supposed to resemble a colossal snake or eel, and to have antler-like projections on its head.

The largest of the cervids is, of course, the North American moose (called elk or elch in Europe), while the North American elk is simply another species or subspecies of the European red deer.

Ethnologists and linguists in the Society, please take note. This might be an area worthy of investigation.

Sterling Lanier
Sarasota, Florida, U.S.A.

To the Editor:

I was very interested in Eugenie Clark's report on the "cookie cutter" shark, particularly the part about their rotating their bodies to tear out chunks of flesh from their victims (Newsletter, Summer, 1988).

Readers may or may not know this, but less than a century ago, there was a superstition about sharks in general to the effect that they were so poorly made that they had to roll on their backs before being able to bite their prey.

In light of what Dr. Clark reported, might not this superstition have gotten its start by someone who had seen a "cookie cutter" shark in action?

Gregory W. Detwiler
Williamsburg, Pennsylvania,
U.S.A.

WOOD'S ANIMAL FACTS

The longest lizard in the world is the Salvadori monitor (Varanus salvadorii) of the eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea, which was not described until 1878. Very little is known about this reptile, but adult males regularly exceed 10ft (3.1m) in length. Nearly 70 percent of the measurement, however, is taken up by the exceptionally long tail.

The largest specimen seen by Dr. F. Baker (pers. comm.) of the Department of Natural Resources (Wildlife Branch) at Konedobu measured 10ft 7in (3.23m), but on another occasion village collectors gave him a piece of rope measuring 15ft 1in (4.6m) which they claimed was the total length of a newly

killed individual, and he said there was no reason for him to doubt the accuracy of the report.

Another male examined personally by Michael Pope (pers. comm.) of Port Moresby was 14ft 7in (4.75m) long, and he was told this lizard sometimes reached a length of over 20 feet (6.1m).

In 1980, an international team of scientists and young explorers from the around-the-world sailing expedition Operation Drake reportedly caught an 18ft (5.5m) monitor in swamp-land near the Gulf of Papua, but this measurement was in error. The largest specimen brought into Masingra by a native hunter

was an immature male measuring 2m (almost 6ft 7in), but zoologist Ian Redmond later sighted another one which he estimated at 12ft (3.7m).

This species is often confused with the similar-sounding Salvator monitor (Varanus salvator) of Malaysia, which has been measured up to 9ft 2in (2.7m). [While the Salvadori monitor is considered the longest lizard in the world, the largest (bulkiest and heaviest) known lizard is the Komodo "dragon" monitor; see Wood's Animal Facts, Newsletter, Spring, 1985 --Editor.]

Abstracted from:

The Guinness Book of Animal Facts and Feats, by Gerald L. Wood, Guinness Superlatives, Enfield, U.. (3rd ed.), 1982.

Honorary Members: Andre Capart (Belgium); Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer (South Africa); John Green (Canada); The Lord Hunt of Llanfair Waterdine (U.K.); Marie-Jeanne Koffmann (U.S.S.R.); Ingo Krumbiegel (Federal German Republic); Theodore Monod (France); Sir Peter Scott (U.K.); Robert Titmus (Canada).

Benefactors: G. A. Buder, III (U.S.A.); Robert C. Dorion (Guatemala); Michael T. Martin (U.S.A.); Gale J. Raymond (U.S.A.); Kurt Von Nieda (U.S.A.); Edward B. Winn (Switzerland); Bette and Joe Wolfskill (U.S.A.); Count F. C. Zedlitz (Argentina).

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